



# News Release

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## **Flu preparedness: Washington eligible for \$7,361,687 in federal grants**

*Money to help public health agencies gear up to fight both seasonal, H1N1 strains*

**OLYMPIA** — Washington is eligible to receive \$7,361,687 in federal grants as it prepares to battle both swine flu (pandemic H1N1 influenza) and seasonal flu this fall and winter.

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius made the announcement after hosting a summit in the Washington, D.C., area last week to plan for the upcoming flu season.

Washington's allocation includes \$5,471,687 for Public Health Emergency Response. That's for work such as preparing for potential vaccination campaigns, reducing swine flu virus exposure, and improving flu monitoring and investigations. The state is also eligible for \$1,890,430 for health care preparedness to help hospitals and other health care facilities plan for emergencies.

"We have taken immediate steps to address the concerns of swine flu," Gov. Chris Gregoire said. "Last month, I authorized the Department of Health to spend \$700,000 to buy additional antiviral medications in preparation for the upcoming flu season. This funding will complement the federal funding, and help our state fight both seasonal flu and swine flu at the same time."

Last month's allocation included \$150,000 to help pay for responding to the spring outbreak.

State and local health agencies will share the money. Distribution hasn't yet been determined.

"It's vital that we work closely with our local health partners on what will be a major effort to inform and protect people in our state this flu season," said Secretary of Health Mary Selecky.

Detailed [swine flu information](#) is on the Department of Health Web site. Selecky encourages people to wash their hands often, to cover their cough, and to stay home when they're sick.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at <http://www.doh.wa.gov> for a healthy dose of information.